



Commander, U.S. Pacific Fleet
Admiral Scott H. Swift
USS Omaha Commissioning Ceremony
San Diego, Calif.
Feb. 3, 2018
As prepared for delivery

Good morning ladies and gentlemen, honored guests, and especially sailors and plank owners of USS Omaha. It is a great afternoon to be here in America's finest city celebrating the fleet's newest war ship.

Omaha's new home here in the U.S. Pacific Fleet area of operations encompasses 100 million miles, nearly half the earth's surface. It includes 36 nations that are home to more than half the world's population, three of the world's largest economies; of the 10 largest militaries in the world, seven are in the Pacific, as are five of the world's declared nuclear powers. The security challenges within this strategic context are unsurprisingly diverse and especially complicated.

In a region defined by the maritime environment, it increasingly falls on the back of maritime forces to uphold the security network that provides stability, which in turn has enabled the prosperity upon which so many national destinies rely. That is why I have directed San Diego's own Third Fleet to take on a greater operational role forward in the Pacific. The power of the Pacific Fleet is the combined power of Third and Seventh Fleet.

We are seeing a reemergence of long-term, strategic competition by revanchist states that leverage military power and coercive and predatory economic relationships to assert their national power and undermine the international rules-based order. Indeed, these competitors seek to force their national laws in international space, and replace the established order with an authoritarian model of their own design to their own advantage.

Our strategic competitors have shown no reluctance about using all dimensions of national power, including threat-filled propaganda, commercial intimidation and operations below the threshold of war to isolate and coerce neighbors into submission on the world stage.

With this background coupled with the vastness and diversity of the Indo-Pacific in mind, and in the context of great power competition, it's clear that we cannot be a one-size-fits-all Navy. Rather, we need to field an array of capabilities across all spectrums and domains to enhance regional partnerships, deter aggression and if needed, win in combat.

Omaha and her sister ships have important and unique capabilities that we need in the Indo-Pacific. I am just as confident today as I was in July 2016 when I wrote about the value of LCS in proceedings magazine that Omaha has an outsized role in our force.

When a ship can, for example, complete maintenance or be rearmed in locations away from traditional U.S. Navy hubs and quickly return to the fight, it complicates a potential adversary's calculus and puts both the enemy's force and their intended course of action at much greater risk. No doubt, any competitors that seek to dominate the Indo-Pacific can neither afford to ignore Omaha, nor underestimate her crew.

As you, the officers and crew of Omaha, hone yourselves and this vessel into an effective combat team, I challenge you to continue to seek new opportunities to make our fleet more agile, more resilient, and more lethal today than we were yesterday. Do not hesitate to innovate, to re-envision what is in the realm of possible, and above all, don't underestimate the impact of your role in the fleet. I know I won't.

On behalf of a proud Pacific Fleet, it gives me great pleasure to welcome USS Omaha and her crew to our team.